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## THE SPIRITS COME TO TOWN.

Is our late article on the Rappings, or so-called Spiritual Manifestations of America, it was anticipated that they would soon be heard of in England; and such has proved to be the case. In the *Times* newspaper throughout the last month, there were advertisements from three different Mediums, offering opportunities of witnessing these wonderful phenomena in London. They had not up to that time attracted much public attention. The press had taken hardly any notice of them; and such notice as it did take, was chiefly in the way of scepticism and derision. Nevertheless, a considerable number of persons in the upper circles of society had been at Mrs Hayden's, or had had her at their houses. The other two Mediums were as yet comparatively obscure and little resorted to. It was at the same time rumoured, that a lady of rank and a baronet had severally had spiritual communications in their own homes. Hearing of these things, we requested of a gentleman, who is accustomed to contribute to our pages, the favour of his going to the various Mediums, and communicating to us exactly what he saw going on amongst them; judging that our readers could not but feel some curiosity regarding what appears as a singular retrogression into effete superstitions. He has complied with our wish, and we publish his communication without any comment of our own.

In attempting to gratify you in your wishes, I deemed it proper to go first to Mrs Hayden's, as she has had the honour of being the first to introduce spirit-rappings into this country. I found her at No. 22 Queen Anne Street, Cavendish Square, attended by her husband, who was till lately the editor of a Boston newspaper. She is a good-looking woman, of about thirty; self-possessed, but of not unpleasing manners. Three or four other persons having assembled, we sat down at a round table, along with the Medium, Mr Hayden sometimes lounging at the fireplace, but oftener engaged in his own affairs in another room. When the company was settled into perfect quietness, the lady, stooping down towards the table, asked: "Are there any spirits present? If so, will they be pleased to manifest themselves?" In a minute or two, a faint ticking noise, hardly distinguishable at first from a creaking of furniture, was heard, as if in the body of the timber constituting the surface of the table. By the Medium's instructions, one of the company, a lady, asked if the spirit wished to communicate with her. No tapping being heard in reply, a negative is inferred. Then another, and another, asked the question in succession, till at length a slight tapping implied an affirmative. I need not describe how various indi-

viduals in the company obtained communications through the alphabet, as you have already explained the process. I may mention, however, a few of the results. One lady entered into communication with the spirit of a deceased infant daughter, who, after stating the place of her death, and the disease of which she died, both truly, said: "I hover around you like an angel, trying to make you happy." An old gentleman, having evoked the spirit of a person he thought of, had her name spelled out—"Harrison" (or some such name), which he explained to be that of a lady deceased thirty years ago, and the dearest friend he had ever had in life. A medical gentleman obtained a communication from the spirit of a nephew of Dr Channing, with whom he had once carried on a correspondence on metaphysical-religious questions, and who stated that he had died at Boston about three weeks ago—an event of which the experimenter had not yet heard. This spirit was asked various questions on religious matters, to which sensible answers were given. I can only remember, that the views of Swedenborg were spoken of with peculiar approbation. A spirit was good enough to communicate with myself. "Was it a relation?"—Yes. "My father (who is long deceased)?"—No. "A brother?"—Yes. "In what year did he leave this earthly sphere? (words directly expressive of mortality being unpleasant to the spirits)"—1833. "The initial of the month?"—F. "The day of the month?"—15. All this was right. Then an address from the spirit to me was spelled out, expressive, however, merely of the doctrine of the immortality of the soul, and the grace of God towards his creatures. Afterwards this spirit gave himself a wrong Christian name, gave his father's correctly, and then his mother's erroneously. I was not conscious at the time of acting in such a way, in my pointings at the letters, as to give any hint of which were the true ones; but I became fully convinced next day, on reflection, that a clever person in the capacity of Medium might in most cases detect a significant pause at the letter which the experimenter knew to be the right one, and would thus be able easily to spell out the expected words and sentences.

"I revisited Mrs Hayden several times, and witnessed many similar "manifestations." On one occasion, a young man was present, who obtained intelligence of the death of a brother long lost in distant lands; also the secret of a murder which he suspected to have taken place in his family. The spirit was asked if he should take measures to bring the guilty party to justice; but this was discommended. The spirits, we were informed, are generally tender towards the reputations and interests of living persons. An unmarried literary lady was present on one occasion,

and had her somewhat extraordinary name correctly spelled. Then the spirit gave her own name as Sarah Traft, appearing to have been a servant in the family, for she was familiar with various circumstances in its history, particularly the death of two young boys, which took place before the experimenter was born. On being asked by the lady to give the maiden name of her mother, it was clearly and readily given as "Hannah Hilditch." A little after this lady had concluded her experiments, one of her rings burst upon her finger, to the great increase of the wonder already excited in the company.

'It would be tedious to describe more of the proceedings at these sances. I may mention, however, that many persons obtained what they considered curious revelations, and that the number of mistakes was comparatively small, although sometimes of a nature to give great support to those who held the whole to be an imposture. Sometimes the spirit which came proved to be a different person from the one invoked or expected; generally a stranger to the inquirer. Sometimes when the desired spirit came, it gave its name with a difference, inserting perhaps a second Christian name, where there ought not to be any. A studious person known to me, of highly nervous temperament and delicate health, was readily attended by several spirits, which readily answered for some time, and then became obstinately silent. At a subsequent visit, they came to him again, and entered into conversation. They were then asked why they had stopped short in their communications on the former occasion; to which an answer was given: "Because we feared to excite him." Many particulars of this kind could be told, curious on an assumption of the verity of the pretended phenomena; but in the opposite assumption, only interpretable as tricks or caprices of the Medium. The table has moved in Mrs Hayden's presence, both in her own lodging, and in the houses which she has visited; but it has not been my fortune to see any phenomena of that kind in her case, excepting a very slight movement of a circular kind, such as could be easily produced by a person sitting beside the table, and using either foot or knee for the purpose.

'I next visited, at a respectable lodging in Devonshire Street, Mrs Roberts, a second American Medium, who has come very recently to this country, in order to "gratify serious and enlightened minds" with "spiritual communications from departed friends." She is an older lady than Mrs Hayden, tall, and of solemn aspect. Her husband, a native of the north of Ireland, is likewise a tall and serious-looking person. They profess to belong to the Episcopal Church, and have all the appearance of being under deep religious convictions. I visited this couple, in company with two ladies—one of them a person of rank; the other, a clever literary woman, who is fully convinced of the verity of the spiritual manifestations. We found a school Bible and prayer-book, with a slate and pencil, lying on the table, round which we proceeded to form a circle. Here, differently from Mrs Hayden's practice, the husband bears an essential part in the operations. I may mention, that the table was an ordinary round one of rosewood, having a pillar resting on a triangular foot, and Mr and Mrs Roberts sat together at a point in the circumference, between two of the resting-points. Laying their palms flat down on the table, the little finger of the gentleman's right hand overlapping that of the lady's left, they engaged in silent prayer for a few minutes. After some invocations and inquiries, a spirit came and manifested itself, not by rapping on the table, as in so many other cases, but by canting it slightly down on the side where the Medium and her husband sat. One tilt, we were informed, indicated a decided negative; a tilt followed by one slighter movement, implied doubt, or inability to answer the question; and a tilt

followed by two slighter movements, was an affirmative. There being no alphabet used here, one can get only yes or no to questions put, unless the spirit shall move some one to write upon the slate. Mr Roberts inquired of the spirit: "If it wished that a part of Scripture should be read;" to which an affirmative answer was given. "In the Old Testament or New?"—The New. "In Matthew—Mark—Luke, &c.?"—In Revelations. "In which chapter—the first—second, &c.?"—The tenth. "Shall it be read by the lady on the right?"—No. "By her on the left?"—No. "By the gentleman?"—Yes. I then read this chapter slowly, to allow of the spirit making signs at particular passages. At the passage: "Seal up those things which the seven thunders uttered, and write them not," there was a tilting of the table; as, likewise, at three or four other passages in the chapter. This was not felt as very satisfactory in any way; so one of the ladies proceeded, of her own accord, to ask questions on religious matters. She inquired if the Bible contained nothing but what was true; if the creed of the Church of England was a near approximation to the truth; if the Romish Church was true; in what sense we were to understand that Christ was the Son of God; if those who had an imperfect belief would suffer on that account hereafter; and so forth. It may be enough to say, that the answers indicated a reliance on what is called orthodox doctrine, yet with a liberal allowance to dissenters, and very mild views as to future punishments. One might have conceived a Universalist to be speaking. The answer given to the inquiry regarding the Romish Church was an unusually deep cant of the table, causing it to fall back with a most emphatic negative. The spirit was then asked: "If thanksgiving was the most valuable part of prayer?"—Yes. "Are petitions for special benefits to ourselves of any avail?"—No. It was remarked by one of the ladies present, that the views on religious subjects drawn forth at the sances of another Medium were of a different tendency, and there was therefore reason to suspect that the intelligence procured was, in a great measure, subjective—that is, tinged with the convictions of the Medium, or, perhaps, of the inquirer. Mrs Roberts did not appear to have considered this point, and when it was explained to her, both she and her husband expressed a strong belief to the contrary. The question being put to the spirit, a negative was given; but when a further interrogative was put: "Is the response affected by particular opinions on the part of the spirit?" the answer was a hearty affirmative. Mr Roberts made several attempts to procure an impulse for written revelations on the slate through his own hand; but to no good result. He shewed us, however, a copy-book which a late visitor had written out, at the dictation or direction of a spirit professing to be Percy Bysshe Shelley, and containing many sentences of a pious sentimental character.

'Within the last fortnight (I am writing on the 23d of April) a third professor of spiritual communications had commenced advertising in the *Times*; and in this case the Medium was announced as a native of our own country. On a rainy, foggy, dreary evening, at seven o'clock, I was at the door of No. 37 Somerset Street, Portman Square, bent on supping full of whatever wonders might be in store for me. Let me here state, that I attended all of these sances in a state of mind, as I believed, neither sceptical nor credulous. Having chiefly in view to describe the externals of the scene, I deemed it best to let things go on in their own way, sufficiently complaisant towards the phenomena to put them in no risk of being marred or interrupted, and yet cool enough to detect any trick of a gross nature. The scene of which I quickly found myself a part, was of a homelier character than those at the residences of either of the two other Mediums. The leading person in the group is apparently a medical

man. The Medium is a young woman of sickly but intelligent appearance. The doctor, as I may call him, had much to tell me regarding his studies in clairvoyance, and, latterly, in spiritual communications, in all of which proceedings, he assured me, his leading aim is to do good to his fellow-creatures, not merely in regard to their health, but in promoting their soul-weal. He has a particular regard to the cure of that class of mental disorders which were in ancient times ascribed to demoniac possession, himself reverting to this doctrine, and fully believing in it. He has at present residing with him a young man named Julius, whom he is endeavouring to cure of such a disorder, and who, he thinks, is making fair progress towards recovery.

We four sat down at a small but solid round three-footed table, and were speedily joined by a fifth individual, a gentleman who seemed to be familiar with the family. Proceedings were commenced by the singing of a hymn on the power of God. We five persons then placed our hands on the table, and the doctor entreated that his kind spirit friends would please to manifest themselves. In a few minutes the table began to stir and tilt up in one direction—namely, towards Julius. It afterwards tilted in the other two directions, in obedience to requests to that effect. The young woman then took paper and a pencil, and prepared to write as the spirit might dictate. At the request of the doctor, I put a question mentally; and in a brief space, the Medium began to write in an abstracted manner, and without looking on the paper, as if yielding to some power external to herself. In a very scrawling hand she wrote as follows:—"I told you before, I do not like a mental question. Ask it aloud. W. W." This signature was held to imply that the spirit was that of the doctor's grandfather. I then, at his suggestion, put the question aloud, in something like the following terms:—"The spirits at Mrs Hayden's give a different view of religious matters from those at Mrs Roberts's. Which are we to understand to be true?" The answer was: "I am a spirit sent by the God of love to impart the knowledge given me for men, for their good. I say, we be to those in the latter day, who believe in those people named Haydens! They are not words and responses from God, but from the devil. They are false and wicked spirits who respond at Mrs Hayden's. At Mrs Roberts's they are very good spirits. Their idea of religion is true, for it is the religion of Christ; but although their religion is right, yet they are not as they ought to be. They are hourly offending their God, and, as we have before said, they will be punished, and all power taken from them, unless they alter, and are more careful of the way they treat this blessing sent from God for the good and instruction of mankind." The Medium professed to know nothing of the sense of what she had written, till it was read over to her. It may also be mentioned, that the writing was stated to be different from her ordinary hand, each spirit causing her to write differently from another; in this instance, it was so sprawling a hand, that the above response occupied nine pages of the size of a child's copy-book.

Led by the style of conversation which prevailed in the company, I afterwards asked: "If the views and feelings which I entertained regarding God were such as the spirits could approve?" to which an affirmative answer was given. I further inquired: "If any spirits attended me in my ordinary course of life?"—Yes. The doctor explaining that everybody was attended by two, a good and a bad, and acted well or ill as the good or bad spirit was allowed to gain the ascendancy. To my inquiry: "If my good spirit had in general the greatest influence over me?" an affirmative answer was returned by three loud thumps of the table on the floor. I inquired if the evil spirit had also some influence; when three gentler thumps were given. I then expressed a

wish to see the table moved along the room, in the manner in which a lady of my acquaintance had lately seen it moved in America. The doctor having put the request, the table presently moved along in the direction of Julius, who had to rise in order to allow it way. As he moved back, with only the tips of his fingers laid upon it, it followed till it had gone about four feet from its former position, and of course was completely clear of the rest of the company. All this was well calculated to surprise for the moment; but although the dynamics of the case were at first a mystery to me, I became convinced afterwards, that, whether drawn along by the youth's fingers or not, it was possible to cause such a table to move under a very much slighter contact of the fingers than any one could have been prepared for; wherefore, I came to attach no consequence to this section of the alleged phenomena. Most undoubtedly I saw the table sliding along, clear of every contact but that of the young man's finger-ends. He then came round to the other side, and, merely touching it, caused it to follow him back to its original place. Finally, the doctor requested us all to resume our seats, and place our hands upon the table; after which, in a formal and reverential tone, he returned his thanks to the spirits for the communications they had vouchsafed to the company that evening.

In my conversations with the doctor, I learned that he entertains a more exalted view of the Spirit Manifestations than either of the other Mediums. Professing to see them entirely in a religious light, he refuses to be concerned in degrading them to the gratification of vulgar curiosity, as they are in his opinion when people ask how many children they have, what is their mother's name, and so forth. "I won't have this wonderful thing used as a toy," says he. "It seems to be the appointed means of bringing great spiritual blessings to mankind, and to that purpose I would confine it." When I asked, however, how he could account for such elevated beings as spirits condescending to such homely proceedings as rappings, table-tippings, and table-movements, he frankly confessed that that was beyond his power. On the whole, the doctor appeared to me an innocent enthusiast. He shewed sheafs of manuscript containing the results of his spiritual consultations, with a preface in highly poetical prose, which the Medium had written a few days ago under the inspiration of one of the spirits.

Such is, I trust, a candid account of the Spirit Manifestations, so far as yet introduced into London. It now remains that we should speak of the principal theories which have been formed, on natural grounds intelligible to us, for the explanation of the so-called mystery. In the first place, your own hint that dollars are at the bottom of it all will scarcely bear handling, since it is perfectly certain that spiritual manifestations form an evening recreation in numberless private families in America, where money is not at all concerned. A lady sitting by my side, who left Boston less than a month ago, assures me she has been present at several séances in private circles, where the individuals were known to her as of the highest ranks in society in that city. This idea, therefore, may be set aside. Then, as to the *mécanique* of the sounds, we have had a hypothesis suggesting their depending on some operation with the foot, for which a very strong fire was necessary in the room. But at all the meetings where I was present, the temperature of the room was ordinary, and I must profess a difficulty in believing that sounds which so plainly appear to proceed from the board of the table, and which one will at one moment hear at one part of that surface, and another time at another, can be produced by the foot at all. Moreover, a trustworthy friend has been present at Mrs Hayden's, when eight different sets of sounds were going on at one time in different parts, not merely of the table, but of the room. Therefore, if ordinary mechanical means are employed



for this part of the alleged imposture, they must be of a much more profound and complicated kind than have yet been surmised.

'With regard to the alphabet-oracle, I have already mentioned the theory which occurred to my own mind after my first visit to Mrs Hayden. I felt not the slightest doubt that the experimenter, in that case, unconsciously gave significations on arriving at the proper letters. Though I could recollect no such acts on my own part in the communication with my brother's spirit, I could not be assured that I had not in this manner betrayed the date of his death, as well as his father's Christian name, while the mistakes regarding his own and his mother's might be assumed as caused by a misapprehension of certain pauses or other accidental movements on my touching certain wrong letters. It was, I must own, a hard supposition to form regarding a lady whom I had met under sanction of the courtesies of society, and whose husband was by profession my equal; but it required little reflection on the singular nature of the thing held out to observation, to assure me that Mrs Hayden must have made up her mind to encounter scepticism and all its consequences. I speedily heard of circumstances lending great support to the theory. A clever journalist, for instance, found that he could, by such significant pauses and movements, bring out any response he pleased, even including one to the effect that the ghost of Hamlet's father had seventeen noses, and another, affirming that Mrs Hayden was an impostor. A friend of my own, a scientific man of high reputation, inquiring who was the first man, did in the same way lead to the answer, "Brian Boru," this person being in reality an Irish hero of the eleventh century. On the other hand, the believers allege that, where such tricks are attempted, tricks are played off by the spirits in return, so that it is hopeless to realise the test which is sought for—a view to which we may, of course, attach what importance we please. I am at least satisfied, that the assumption of proof of imposture through this means is premature, for I have seen the alphabet used successfully behind the Medium's back, where only visitors were present; and I am assured that this is often done with precisely the same effect as when the alphabet is displayed on the table.

'Perhaps the most startling of all the alleged facts is that of the table-movement, seeing that it is perfectly tangible, or apprehensible by the ordinary senses. I may remark, that, for my own part, I never felt greatly perplexed about these phenomena, till I saw the table in Somerset Street moving slowly along a floor without any visible force. The impression, indeed, was but momentary, for we are too well aware of what wonderful things may be done through occult means by such gentlemen as Messieurs Anderson, Robin, and Houdin, to suppose it improbable that some natural dynamics were employed in the case. Still, the thing is highly curious and striking. It seems the more remarkable, when we learn that it takes place in many of the private circles across the Atlantic. We have there the additional difficulty of accounting for an imposture so extensively practised among persons of importance in society, and practised so long without any of the practitioners yielding to the temptation of telling all, and getting a laugh at the many dupes. While I write, an article from the *Augsburg Gazette*, of 30th March, reaches me, giving an account of the introduction of the table-moving phenomenon in private circles at Bremen. Thence it quickly proceeded to Vienna, where, according to a correspondent of the *Times*,\* it was immediately in great vogue. It is also introduced into Berlin, Dresden, and Munich; in short, a few weeks have been sufficient to see Germany laid completely open to this marvel, while in England,

months have passed without seeing it go beyond a few private circles.

'In the brief space left, it is difficult to convey the hypothesis I have formed regarding these strange demonstrations. I can give my views only in a very condensed form. The greater number of the persons concerned are, in my opinion, credulous people, visionaries and enthusiasts, who first impose upon themselves, and then upon others. Were they impostors in full consciousness of imposition, as some assert, their tricks would have been exposed long ere now in a hundred quarters. The Spirit Manifestations are rather to be explained as resembling one of the manias of the middle ages. The thing rests primarily on philanthropic and religious zeal; secondly, on mere love of the wonderful; but what I hold to be above all essential to it, is a view to some good ultimate result beyond the gratification of vulgar curiosity. The practitioners all start with a belief that such manifestations are possible, and do continually take place in the presence of properly-qualified persons. In their own trials, they help the effects—that is, produce them; thinking no evil, since these effects would otherwise come of themselves; or perhaps hardly conscious of their doing that which they only expect to see done; but anyhow, fully disposed to stretch a point for the sake of the end in view, whether that be directly to convince others of there being a spiritual world always around us, or merely to obtain countenance for their own convictions.

'There must also be cases where a deliberate trick is practised; but I believe these to be rare. Now, it must be admitted that there are some difficulties regarding certain phenomena; as, for example, the alphabet-reading out of sight of the Medium. But when I consider how much help the complaisant experimenter is capable of giving unconsciously to the Medium, I think we may regard this problem as not quite irresolvable in consonance with our hypothesis. The direct and downright people, who say the whole is rank imposture, will be unable to appreciate the analytical view I take; but those who have studied the profound deceitfulness of the human heart, and seen how shadowy are the divisions between self-deception and active deluding, will find less difficulty in the case. And it surely cannot appear to any as very strange, that a visionary female, who thinks that a spirit writes with her hand, is also convinced that the same spirit is guiding her hand when she uses its force to depress a table on one side or cant it up on another. With such an impression on her mind, the idea of deception will never once occur to her. The *mechanics* of the rapping phenomena is not yet explained in consonance with this hypothesis; but I wait in full confidence that it soon will be so.

A. R.'

#### THE HERRING—NATURAL AND ECONOMICAL.

Then up jumped the Herring, the king of the sea,  
Crying: 'Raise your head-sheets, clap your helm a-lee;  
For it's stormy weather, stormy weather.  
When the ship sinks, we'll be all together.'

Old Sea-song.

THE herring is the head of a large family-group of fishes whose natural affinities have been long recognised, and whose vast numbers, regular periods of migration, facility of capture, and wholesomeness as food, render them of greater importance to mankind than all the rest of the finny race put together. Who dare say that this truly royal fish is not well designated, in old proverbial parlance, by the high-sounding appellation—King of the Sea? What monarch, we should like to know, be he king or kaiser, has created more maritime nations, raised more fleets, trained more seamen, caused more treaties to be negotiated, more diplomatic mysti-

actions to be perpetrated, more statutes to be enacted, or has bountifully provided more starving people with liberal supplies of nutritious and agreeable aliment? Nor is it to the historian, the politician, and the economist alone that the herring tribe possess a peculiar and powerful interest. The naturalist, with his scalpel in one hand and note-book in the other, tells us of their singular internal organisation; of their instinctive impulse, analogous to that of certain birds, which compels them to migrate at fixed seasons; of the many varieties of their species, amounting to 130; and of their innoxious qualities, only one of that large number—a tiny sprat found in the Indian Ocean—being deleterious and unfit for the use of man.

Many species were well known to the naturalists of Greece and Rome. Aristotle speaks of the *thrissa* (shad), *trichia* (sardine), and *trichias* (sprat), and erroneously regards them as all three being the same fish in different stages of growth. One of the characters in Aristophanes's comedy of *The Knights* says, that 100 trichias were sold for an obole; and another, in *The Acharnians*, by the same author, speaks of their being salted and used as provisions for the fleet. The herring, however, never migrating so far south as the Mediterranean, was unknown to the ancients; its name, in all modern languages, proclaims its more western haunts, being, in all probability, derived from the German *heer*, a host—by no means inapplicable to a fish that travels in such vast shoals. Artedi, the unfortunate Swedish naturalist, who sought and found his own death, at an early age, in the canal of Leyden, was the first who united the herring of the north-western seas of Europe to its kindred of the Mediterranean, giving the whole family the denomination of the *Clupeide*—a name they still retain.

The earliest authentic accounts of herring-fisheries are found in the *Sagas*, handed down to us by the indefatigable Snorre Sturleson. By them, we find that there were extensive fisheries on the coast of Norway, so early as the year 978; and more than one beneficent reign is noted as being abundant in herrings and corn; the wise monarch encouraging agriculture and fishing. The reign of Macbeth, the tyrant of fiction, but the good king of history, was similarly blessed. Wytouton, in his *Cronykil*, tells us that—

Al hys tyme wey gret plenté  
Abowndand bath on land and sé.

The large sums spent by Macbeth in charity, during his stay at Rome, as recorded by Mariana, proves that in 'hys tyme' Scotland must have had a foreign trade, the basis of which was without doubt a productive herring-fishery. Indeed, in the succeeding century, about 1153 English and Dutch herring-fishers visited the Scottish coasts in considerable numbers, and statutes, still extant, were enacted for their regulation.

Both fresh and salt herrings are mentioned in charters granted by Edward the Confessor. The charter of the Abbey of St Catherine, near Rouen, dated in 1030, gives the monks a privilege of salting herrings. In *Doomsday Book*, the town of Sandwich was rated at 40,000 herrings yearly, and the town of Dunwich, at 60,000. In spite of all this evidence, and a great deal more unnecessary to cite, the modern myth still prevails, that William Beukels, a Fleming, who died in 1449, first invented the art of curing herrings. Probably he invented some improvements in the curing, packing, or preparation of the salt, which, being adopted by his countrymen, obtained a superior reputation for their fish, known in foreign marts as Flemish herrings. This trade subsequently fell into the hands of the Dutch, who pushed it vigorously, exporting even to

Brazil, and thus founded the maritime importance of Holland. Beukels's invention, whatever it may have been, was acknowledged by his countrymen. After his death, a magnificent tomb was erected to his memory in his native town of Biervliet. In 1536, when the Emperor Charles V. was making the tour of his dominions in the Netherlands, accompanied by his sister, the queen-dowager of Hungary, he visited the tomb of Beukels, and there ate a red herring, and drank a cup of wine to the memory of the Flemish fisherman.

The city of Amsterdam was founded in a swamp about 1205. People say it was built upon herring-bones; but this is only a metaphor, for the herring subsequently enriched and made it a great mercantile mart. The town of Yarmouth was in like manner founded by the king of the sea. In the time of the Conqueror, foreign fishermen resorted to the denes of Yarmouth, to dry their nets, and purchase fish from the Norse-descended seamen of Norfolk. A few huts to cure fish in were all the buildings then erected on the precarious sands, not long risen from the sea, and which, in men's minds, might soon again be submerged in the yeasty deep. Tradition says, that in one of those huts the first bloaters were accidentally made, through some fish being inadvertently placed on the rude roof of boughs, while the fishermen, unconscious of the approaching discovery, were warming themselves at a wood-fire on the damp sand underneath. However that may have been, it is no tradition but an authenticated fact, that Herbert, bishop of Norwich, surnamed *Losinga*, or the Liar, having been sentenced by the pope to build a church, in expiation of his incurable mendacity, erected a chapel on the north dene 'for the soul's health, and prosperous success of the fishermen that came to Yarmouth in the herring season.' Yet, such were the good old times, that the proud barons of the Cinque-Ports coming to fish, brought their own priest with them, and 'expelled and evil entreated the bishop's priest there formerly placed.' The bishop complained to the king, his priest was restored, and the humble chapel became the nucleus round which was subsequently erected the town of Yarmouth. Year by year, the fishery and the town increased in importance. Many of the larger English monastic establishments erected warehouses at Yarmouth, 'in order,' as we are informed, 'to buy up herrings at the proper season, to the inestimable advantage as well as honour of their abbeyes.'

It is a curious fact that, to the irruption of the Mongols under Batu Khan, we are indebted for information regarding the early English herring-fishery; a remarkable illustration how nations are connected by commercial and other ties—how great political events, like the earthquake's shock, are felt, in the language of the geologists, to the remotest points of the area of disturbance. Half a million pagan Tatars, pouring down from the steppes of Asia, ravaged Prussia, Hungary, and Poland, threatening to desolate all Europe, and extirpate the very name of Christianity. A few years previously, the herring, ever capricious in its migrations, deserted the Baltic; and the Danes, Swedes, and Frieslanders were obliged to resort to Yarmouth, and purchase from the English. But in 1238, such was the consternation wherewith the northern nations viewed the Tatar approach, that they abandoned foreign commerce, and remained at home to defend their respective countries. The Yarmouth fishery that year was most productive, but there being no foreign purchasers, herrings were sold at a cheaper rate in England than ever they had previously been, as Matthew of Paris informs us, and we may add, than ever they have been since. We have just said that the herring, for a period, left the shores of the Baltic; but before doing so, the king of the sea had refined and civilised a nation. De Helmoed, in his continuation of the *Slavonian Chronicles*, under the date 1206, tells us, that 'The Danes, who, being a

maritime people, had formerly used only the manners and dress of sailors, now imitated those of other nations, and were clothed in scarlet, purple, and fine linen, for they abounded in all kinds of riches, by means of the fishery they had every year on the coast of Schonen, which attracted merchants from all countries with gold, silver, and precious merchandise, to purchase the herrings bestowed upon them by the bounty of Providence. Nor were the Danes enriched only, they were also polished and enlightened, in consequence of their prosperous fishery, for learning became much more common among them than before, and the sons of the principal people were generally sent to finish their education at Paris, then the most celebrated seminary in Europe.

Let us now return to the capital of the king of the sea—Yarmouth. In a short time, man's industry and the herring's magic power transformed the rude fishing-huts into a town, the slight fishing-boats into a fleet. When Edward III. besieged Calais, Yarmouth furnished forty-three ships, manned with 1075 sturdy mariners. By the roll of the high fleet for that year, it appears that no other town or city in England, not even London, supplied the king with so large a number of ships and men.

A desperate and continuous struggle of man against nature was for centuries carried on by the people of Yarmouth, to retain their trade in herrings. The dogged determination wherewith the Dutch defended their dikes from the encroaching sea, was fully equalled by Englishmen in their efforts to preserve the port of Yarmouth, which, from its natural position, was peculiarly liable to be blocked up by shifting sands. From the time of the third Edward to that of Elizabeth, no less than seven different harbours were excavated. The history of these undertakings would fill a volume, and would form a most interesting illustration of what may be accomplished by energy and perseverance. Not only did the winds, waves, and quicksands destroy one harbour after another, but war, rebellion, pestilence, and poverty resisted the efforts and palsied the hands of the townsmen. At one time we read how they sold their church plate, bells, and vestments to raise funds to carry on the work; at another, we find that every inhabitant, excepting the shipwrights preparing vessels for the herring-fishery, laboured three days per week—Sunday, Monday, and Tuesday—at the excavations; the women and children assisting on the other days. Again, the danger becomes more imminent; the town gunpowder is sold—better be plundered by an enemy than lose their haven—and the inhabitants are divided into four bands, that are alternately called out to the work day and night, until the crisis is past. At last the seventh harbour was completed, and though kept up at great expense, it remains a monument of East-Anglian perseverance unto the present day.

Well, indeed, might Nashe, in his *New Play of the Red Herring* (*Fitte of all Clearks of Noblemens Kitchens to be read; and not unnecessary by all Serving-men that have Short Boord-wages to be remembered*), term Yarmouth 'the superimente, principal metropolis of the royal red fish.' An extract from Nashe, as a specimen of the small wit current even in the days of the great Shakespeare, may not be uninteresting. Speaking of the red herring, he says: 'Behold! it is every man's money, from the knight to the courtier; every house-keeper, or Goodman Baltrop, that keeps a family in pay, casts for it as one of his standing provisions. The poorer sort make it three parts of their sustenance. With it for his dinner, the patchested leather pilche laboratho may dine like a Spanish duke. In the craft of catching or taking it, and smudging it marchant and chapmanable as it should be, it sets a work thousands, who live all the rest of the year gayly well, by what, in a few weekes, they scratch up then, and come to beare office of questman and scavenger in the

parish where they dwell, which they could never have done, but would have begged or starved with their wives and brats, had not this king of the squamy cattle stood their good lord and master.'

We shall not attempt to describe the exterior of a fish so well known as the herring; and its internal organisation is scarcely suitable for a popular description; but its migrations are worthy of notice. It was long understood by the most eminent naturalists, that the herring wintered in the frozen regions of the north, migrating southwards, and returning to its winter-quarters every year. With a minuteness of detail and a stretch of imagination worthy of Defoe, we were told how the great shoal of herrings on its southward course was divided into two bodies by the Shetland Islands; and how one of these bodies passed along the eastern coast of Great Britain, the other along the western, until they met in the Atlantic, from whence, having reunited, they made their way back to the polar circle. This theory is now exploded, being completely at variance with observed facts. We have said that the migrations of the herring are analogous to those of certain birds; not, indeed, to those of the duck or swallow tribes, which travel to and from distant lands, but to those of our smaller birds, that are found on the mountains during summer, and on the lowlands in winter. Impelled by unfailing instinct, the herring leaves the depths of our surrounding seas to deposit its spawn in the shallower waters of the coast, there to be vivified by the genial influence of the sun; and after accomplishing its purpose, it retires to the adjacent deeps. The fish are in their best condition previous to spawning; after that, they are termed shotten, and are in a poor, exhausted state, totally unfit for human food. Falstaff, the 'huge hill of flesh,' could scarcely have imagined a greater contrast when he exclaimed: 'If manhood, good manhood, be not forgot on the face of the earth, then am I a shotten herring.'

The herring is essentially a northern fish; seldom has it been found so far south as the Bay of Biscay in Europe, or the coast of Carolina in America. Like plants that flourish in certain climates only, become fewer and more stunted the nearer they approach the limits of their zone, the herrings decrease in number and size as they approach their assigned southern boundary—those caught on the southern shores of England being considerably smaller than those which frequent the coast of Norway. Thus it is, that about the month of July, the grand annual array of herrings is found to the northward of the Shetlands, in distinct columns, five and six miles long, three and four miles broad. Pressing for the shallows, they drive the sea before them in a continuous ripple. Sometimes they sink down fathoms deep for a few minutes, then again rising to the surface, sparkle in the sun like a prairie strewn with diamonds. Nor even during the calm summer night is the scene less brilliant, from the intense scintillations of phosphoric light exhibited by the countless myriads of moving fish. The quantity of life in these shoals would be completely beyond belief, if we did not recollect that 6000 eggs have been counted in the spawn of one herring. Miller, in his delightful work, *The Old Red Sandstone*, thus describes a shoal of these fish:—'I have watched them at sunrise on the middle of the Moray Firth, when, far as the eye could reach, the surface has been ruffled by the splash of fins, as if a light breeze swept over it, and the red light has flashed in gleams of an instant on the millions and tens of millions that were leaping around me, a handbreadth into the air, thick as hailstones in a thunder-shower. If the scene spoke not of infinity in the sense in which the Deity comprehends it, it spoke of it in at least the only sense in which man can comprehend it.' A distinguished French naturalist calculates that, in twenty-three years, the fecundity of



the herring, if not kept down by a vast annual destruction, would completely fill all our northern seas with these fish, so that they would become a horrible pest instead of a blessing to the human race. There is no danger, however, of such a catastrophe. The great shoals of herrings are ever attended by an immense number of enemies, which prey and batten on them. The very heart of the shoal is penetrated by numberless dogfish, and others of the rapacious shark tribe; while on its edges, porpoises and grampuses snort and roll in uncouth gambols; the cachalot, whose tongue is as large as a well-filled feather-bed, taking in a bushel of herrings at one mouthful. The surface of the sea is dotted with birds of the diver tribe, and thousands of gulls and gannets scream and wheel upon the wing, occasionally plunging down for a savoury fish. Mr Buchanan has calculated that the gannets of St Kilda alone devour 105,000,000 herrings every year!

'Do herring is no dead, so as I will kill him,' said the irritable Dr Caius of his meddling antagonist, Sir Hugh Evans. The proverb, 'As dead as a herring,' is common to several languages, though founded on the erroneous belief, that a herring dies as soon as it is taken out of the water. This is not a fact; but herrings, being principally caught by the gill-covers, in nets which are put into the sea at night and drawn up in the morning, numbers of the earlier-captured fish are drowned, as the fishermen term it—hanged upon the water. This, no doubt, gave rise to the proverb. But when herrings are caught by the hook and line, they live as long after their capture as the trout, salmon, or any other fish possessing an equally high standard of respiration, and therefore the same vital necessity for oxygen.

It may surprise some readers to learn, that in the latter part of the sixteenth century kingdoms were thrown into consternation, and the learned men of Europe into a whirlpool of controversy, by a simple herring. In 1587, a herring was caught in the Baltic, having something like Gothic characters marked upon its sides. This odd fish was taken to Copenhagen, and the Danish and Swedish savants declared it to be an omen of some signal misfortune to the human race. The king, unsatisfied, sent it to Rostock, from whence it made the tour of the German universities, each learned Theban giving a different interpretation of the mystical letters. Ponderous folios were written on this enigmatical fish, the general idea being, that it foretold the conquest of Europe by the Ottoman. In 1596, a somewhat similarly marked herring was caught on the coast of Pomerania; and Eglin, a distinguished professor of theology at Zurich, wrote a bulky tome, to prove that the mystical marks gave the long-required explanation of the dark passages in the Book of Revelation.

The remarkable fact, that herrings will visit one locality for years, and then leave it all at once, resorting to another part of the coast where they were previously unknown, has occasioned much discussion. In all probability, this apparent caprice is caused by the greater or lesser supply of the small crustacea the herring delights to feed upon. Uninformed minds, however, are never satisfied with a simple reason. As the erection of Tenterden steeple was said to have caused Goodwin Sands, so the manufacture of kelp was said to have driven the herrings from many parts of the Highland coasts, though they actually went to other localities where kelp was made. The steam-boat, too, it was said, did great mischief by driving away herrings, though they left places where its smoke was scarcely ever seen, to rendezvous in the paddle-beaten waters of Loch Fine. But the most extraordinary instance of this nature is recorded in the pages of Hansard, so often referred to by our learned legislators. In 1835, during

a debate on the Tithe Bill, an honourable member stated in the House of Commons, that an Irish clergyman having signified his intention of claiming a tithe upon fish, the indignant herrings left that part of the coast, and never after returned!

#### A WORD ON PRICES.

Our political economists have been assiduous in impressing upon us the dependence of price upon supply and demand; but they have altogether failed to observe how far it also depends, in all countries, on the accident of the value of the popular coins. If an article be 'Price One Shilling,' or if an exhibition placard announce 'Admission One Shilling,' it conveys something more than the mere equality of value between the service rendered and price paid. Let us see.

Monsieur Jullien, we will say, announces one shilling as the price of admission to his promenade concert. Does he mean thereby, that the musical pleasure is worth exactly  $87\frac{1}{2}$  troy grains of standard silver, neither more nor less? Would his sense of justice to himself lead him to reject 85 grains as being too little, or his conscience impel him to decline 90 as being too much? The maestro thinks nothing about these niceties; it is handy, convenient, definite to fix upon a current coin, and he would do this just the same were this coin to contain 85,  $87\frac{1}{2}$ , or 90 grains of silver. He would not trouble himself about these fractions, either in excess or defect; he adapts his prices to the coins, and the coins thus really do affect prices, in his and in all similar cases.

The truth is, that we like to pay in *one piece* of coin, whenever we can do so, as a saving of time and trouble; and herein lies the secret of 'Price One Shilling.' So potent is this, that we almost seem to be a shilling nation. A shilling, in its concrete reality, is a neat, compact, serviceable, respectable-looking commodity. It has just glitter enough upon it to relieve it from dullness, but not enough to render it garish and meretricious. It occupies a very snug position either in the pocket or the purse. There is a moral respectability about a shilling. We may without loss of dignity ask for change for a shilling; whereas change for a sixpence is almost mean and pettifoggish; and change for half-a-crown is a large commercial transaction, requiring some nerve to enter upon. When the verger, or some other officer, has shewn you all the architectural and monumental curiosities of a cathedral, his hand fashions itself just to the shape and size for receiving a shilling; when an old woman has escorted you through the ruins of an abbey or a castle, telling her tales of marvel as she goes, her thoughts gradually tend shilling-ward; when you have walked through the picture-gallery and the state-rooms of some old English mansion, a shilling rewards the white-aproned domestic—unless, indeed, the silk-attired housekeeper be the ciccone, in which case you have some misgiving about the shilling. In short, from various circumstances, there really is among us a greater tendency to employ shillings than any other silver coins in our daily intercourse and tradings; and this would continue to be the case, even if the shilling contained a little more or a little less silver than it does.

It is not every one who is aware, until his attention be called to the matter, how remarkably this employment of a definite shilling is observable in everyday life at the present time. The shop-windows, the posting-bills, the newspaper advertisements, all tell the

same tale. Do we want useful knowledge, knowledge for the people, science made easy? There is the Polytechnic Institution—a shilling; there will soon be the Pantechneion—a shilling; and there are shilling lectures and illustrations at museums and Athenæums, and literary and mechanics' institutions all over the country. Are we artistically inclined? There is the Royal Academy, and the British Institution, and the Society of British Artists, and the Water-colour Exhibition, and similar exhibitions in provincial towns as well as in the metropolis—all offer their treasures to be unlocked by a shilling-key. Shall our visit be to panoramas and cosmoramas, dioramas and cycloramas? shall they be Holy Lands, Australian Diggings, Arctic Regions, Wellington Campaigns, Overland Routes, Bernese Alps, Mississippi pictures a mile long?—here we have them all at a shilling a head. The venerable Miss Linwood has passed beyond the region of shillings; but the never-dying Madame Tussaud—never-dying on paper, at least—still pours out her abundance of Cardinal Wisemans, and George Hudsons, and Louis Napoleons—at a shilling the lot. Or if the organs of wonder are to be appealed to, there are the Houdins, Philippes, Döblers, Hellers, Andersons, Jacobs, ready to take our shilling; and Mons. Robin will be happy, for a shilling per visitor, to extinguish Madame Robin every evening till further notice.

In serious matters, and in matters of light pleasurable amusement, it will be found that this shilling limit really presents itself in a remarkably diversified way. If we are admirers of the monopolological style of entertainment, where a bit of fun and a bit of music come in aid of each other, and perhaps in aid also of pictorial display, then will Albert Smith take us to the summit of Mont Blanc for a shilling, or Mr Woodin will give us a shillingworth of his drolleries; or Mr Love will, for a shilling, imitate all kinds of living beings that ever have been or ever will be. We can roam all about Mr Wyld's great Globe for a shilling—albeit the world seems turned inside out, and the people walk up stairs where the earth's axis ought to be. In our various dramatic entertainments, the shilling—all things considered—is the most general and effective agent for free admission. Then there are the shilling casinos, where fast young men are wont to congregate. Then, in summer-time, there are the amusement-gardens, as we may term them—the Zoological for natural history; the Surrey Zoological for animals and plants, and monster-pictures, and open-air concerts and fireworks; the Cremorne, for balloons and ballets, horses and pyrotechnics; the Hippodrome, for equestrianism *par excellence*, and ballooning as a specialty; and numberless gardens near our great towns—all, nearly without exception, adopt the shilling standard. Are we students? then will Mons. —, or Herr —, or Signor —, teach us French, or German, or Italian at a shilling a lesson; and lest we doubt this, the advertisement columns of the *Times* will set us right. Has our 'deportment' been neglected in early life? then will Mons. — teach us dancing and grace for a shilling a lesson, without charging 'twopence more for manners.' Is it the pianoforte we yearn to know something about? then will the young lady, 'who has studied under Moscheles and Herz,' not despise a humble shilling as payment for each lesson. Or is it singing, or the violin, or the flute? the shilling serves here also as a musical introduction. But it is really painful sometimes to read what poor governesses are ready to do for a pittance; we will not mix up our shilling with this too often sad subject. Nor is it pleasant to see so respectable a friend as a shilling lugged in, and made an instrument to encourage betters and gamblers to offer 'tips' and 'picks' for a race; or drawn from a simple servant-girl by a crafty fortune-teller; or paid by a simpleton of either sex for the determination of personal character by examining hand-

writing; or presented to the once renowned Joseph Ady—may his shadow never disturb us!—for 'something to our advantage.'

In the business of bookselling and publishing, we cannot fail to see how widely spread are the attempts now made to bring up (or down) volumes to a shilling standard. Our bookshops and railway bookstalls sufficiently indicate this. The shillingworth of *Uncle Tom* is known to everybody. As for the *Railway Libraries*, *Parlour Libraries*, *Popular Libraries*, *Fireside Libraries*, *Readable Books*, *Books for the Rail*, *Travellers' Libraries*, &c., it is marvellous what can be bought for a shilling. The drab *Quarterly*, and the blue-and-yellow *Edinburgh*, once the magnates of the literary world, now bow to the shilling, by pouring forth their shillingworths of Macaulay and Sydney Smith, and Head, and others; and there are frequently to be met with original volumes, of very high merit, written expressly for one or other of the various shilling series. Educational books, and manufacturing books, and engineering books, at a shilling, are now abundant. Music-publishing, too, has not failed to come within the domain of the mighty shilling. Our mamas and grandmamas, when single—ladies do not buy much music when they are married—had to make a serious pecuniary effort to obtain the collected airs of a popular opera; but now we may revel in Bellini and Donizetti, Mozart and Rossini, with such shillingworths as were never known before; and then, instead of a two-shilling 'book of the opera,' we can, for one shilling, obtain a book which, besides the Italian and English words, gives a few bars of all the principal melodies. Nor does the draughtsman or the writer, the school-boy or the artist, fail to reap benefit from this remarkable tendency to adopt a shilling limit in prices. There is the shilling box of paints, which a manufacturer has produced under the incitement of a prize offered by the Society of Arts; and capital paints they are for the money. Then there are parallel rulers and graduated scales, pen-compasses and mahogany squares—each and all brought down to a shilling level with remarkable success. And who can forget the shilling packets of note-paper, so nicely done up in fancy wrappers; or the shilling box of envelopes, cheap, elegant, and convenient; or the shilling cards from Birmingham, each containing an ever-pointed pencil, a penholder, a wafer-stamp, a store of pencil-leads, a store of steel-pens, and a stick of wax; or the shilling blotting-case, forming a tolerable substitute for a writing-desk?

We may safely depend upon it, that all this is attributable to something more than mere freak. Men do not adopt largely any one particular system from personal oddities or temporary vagaries—there are moving forces lying somewhat deeper. To pay and receive one coin, involves less time and trouble than paying and receiving two coins of equal aggregate value. Here is a key to unlock the riddle. And if we were to adopt any other coin as a standard, we shall find something of similar import. Twenty shillings is a more frequent price in shops than twenty-two or eighteen—not because twenty is a 'rounder' number, but because there happens to be a coin of that value. In the days when guineas were plentiful and sovereigns scarce, the price of an article was more frequently twenty-one shillings than twenty, although the former is a less complete and manageable number than the latter. More articles are charged five shillings than either six or four; more have the price two shillings and sixpence, than either three shillings or two; more are sixpence than eightpence; more are one penny than twopence—and all for the same reason—ease of paying and ease of reckoning, when the payment can be made with one piece of coin instead of two. As for the penny—the ubiquitous penny—who can measure its trading importance? Penny steamers, penny omnibuses, penny-a-mile trains, penny almanacs, penny



valentines, penny postage-stamps, penny coal-dues, penny pictures, penny boxes of toys, penny buns, penny biscuits, penny periodicals, penny cigars—more is done with a penny now than at any former time, since the period when the labourers worked for a penny a day. The shilling has taken supreme command of our well-to-do shops, while the penny is keeping up a vigorous competition with it in a somewhat lower grade.

We do not ask the reader to ponder very deeply on this matter, or to make it a subject of profound inquiry; but, at the same time, we persist in asserting, that there is 'something in it.' Prices are affected, in the way indicated by the above examples, by the weights and sizes which happen to have been selected for our familiar current coins. The shilling is potent, not because it contains so many grains of silver, but because it is one whole, distinct, decided coin.

### NOTES ON THE CAFFRES.

BY A NEIGHBOUR OF THEIRS.

THE tribes of the Amakosa and Amatalo natives—that is, the Caffres who live in the districts surrounding the mountains of that name—are ranked among the greatest warriors of the native tribes of South Africa, and held in the greatest fear and dislike by their more peaceable neighbours the Fingoes, Mantatees, and Bechuanas. The Caffres distinguish themselves from all other tribes, by cutting a hole in the top part of their ears; and they never fail, when first addressing any one, to put up their hands and press the ear forward, to shew their caste. They cannot be offered a greater insult than by being called a Fingoe, for that, in their language, signifies a dog, and they consider the Fingoes as little better.

The Caffres are a fine athletic race of men: they range generally from 5 feet 8 to 6 feet in height. They have the close curly hair of the negro, and mostly flat noses and broad nostrils, but well-shaped mouths, and fine white teeth. They are very healthy, and very swift in walking. I have frequently heard of their keeping up with a man on horseback for a whole day, and it is quite common for a foot-messenger to go fifty miles a day. They are governed by six or seven chiefs, each having from 2000 to 3000 warriors under his absolute control. In these chiefs they place implicit confidence and reliance, and obey all their orders with scrupulous exactness. The chief when at his *kraal*, or village, is distinguished by the quantities of brass wire twisted round his arms and legs, and the fine rows of brass buttons on his leopard-skin *caross*. In peace, the male Caffres spend their days in smoking and sleep, or, when hunger compels them, in following the chase. They are cunning, revengeful, and cowardly. The most accomplished thieves, the greatest exaggerators and rogues, are the idols and envy of the tribe. They have the war-dance amongst them, exactly like the *courbory* of the Australian natives, mentioned by Sir Thomas Mitchell.

They believe in a Great Spirit or Father, who causes rain to fall when their doctors ask for it; and in the power of the doctors to impart invisible medicine, that gives the warriors strength and power over their enemies. They believe, likewise, in all kinds of necromancy and witchcraft. The doctors, or rain-makers as they are usually called, are the worst of the people, and, for the most part, the wealthiest. They have charge of certain sacred cows. In times of drought, the chief sends for the doctor, who, on condition of a certain

compensation—say, two or three cows—agrees to consult the Spirit on the subject. He goes behind a rock or some sheltered place, and commences his incantations by the most hideous noises, throwing about at the same time skins of snakes, skulls of monkeys, bones, &c., until he thinks he has made a sufficient impression. He then comes out and prophesies. If he sees no prospect of rain, and he is generally a good judge of the weather, he will sometimes say that the rain will not fall until any individual that he has a dislike to is killed, or until his or her possessions are placed in his hands to appease the spirit. Although it is not often that they prophesy the death of the individual, yet it may be in the recollection of some, that in the time of Sir George Napier's government, he had to threaten the Caffres with soldiers, to prevent them from burning one of their princesses, *Miss Suto*; for the doctors had, on the death of a chief, Tyali, or Charley, who died from excess of drinking, declared that she had caused his death by witchcraft. When the rain-makers find that the rain will not come when they do call on it, they contrive to get out of the way for awhile, to escape the wrath of the chief.

The Caffre women are seldom tall, but they are very strong and active, and have very good figures, with pleasing faces. They do all the drudgery and hard work: build the huts, cut the thorn-bushes (*Mimosa*) for pens for the cattle and goats, dig the ground, plant the potatoes, sow the Indian corn, carry water; and when the encampment moves, they carry immense bundles on their heads and backs, while the men walk leisurely and empty-handed by their side. I have frequently seen poor Caffre women digging the ground with children fastened to their backs and to their side, resting on the hip-joint. They are kind mothers, and appear to be very fond of their infants; but they take little care of them if they become obstinately sickly, and often desert them, leaving them at the mercy of wild animals. Their cooking utensils usually consist of an iron pot with three legs, like the common pot used by the Scotch peasantry. They make great use of the dried gourd or calabash, for drinking utensils, for holding milk, &c.; and in some of the huts you may find beautifully-carved cups and spoons, generally representing the heads of wild animals. They also make use of skin-bags for holding wild-honey, and a thickened milk, which they are very fond of with their corn. The women as well as the men smoke immoderately. They prefer tobacco, but they usually smoke the leaves of an intoxicating plant called by them *Dachà*. The leaf is much like the sage; but it is a large shrub, and bears a very pretty scarlet flower. They take snuff, too, in immense quantities, using it by means of spoons. Both men and women are very fond of ornaments, and will frequently give a goat for a bunch of garnet-coloured beads. A Caffre belle covers her arms with brass wire, and her neck with strings of beads; and the rank of the princesses is distinguished, like that of the men, by an embroidery of brass buttons on the *caross*. On the approach of a stranger, a princess immediately displays her arm, and arranges gracefully the *caross* to shew the embroidery. These skin-mantles are worn by all the natives of South Africa in their savage state. They are mostly made of the hide of the bullock—rubbed down to great softness—and the better kind of skins of wild animals. Some of the latter are very beautiful, and cannot be purchased from the traders under L.5 or L.6.

The women make excellent baskets and mats; and, in peace-time, they come to the towns and villages in great numbers, for the sale of their wares. They never ask less than *sixpence* for the smallest basket, and appear to know well the value of money, which they spend in a cautious manner, mostly on tobacco, snuff, gunpowder, &c., for their husbands. When the chiefs come to town, they dress in a fine suit of

regimentals, sometimes with a cocked-hat and feathers. They are accompanied by twenty or thirty followers, and a doctor. They walk boldly into the houses, and, after asking the news in broken English or Dutch, will expect a dram or *soopie*, and food; and then, when opportunity offers—when their followers cannot hear them—they will ask for a *stropence* or *sillingie*; and they can scarcely be got rid of till the request is complied with.

The Caffres occasionally engage themselves for a short time as servants to the farmers, but they seldom take their leave without appropriating some few horses and cattle, when the farmer will sometimes have to follow the *spoor* into Caffreland before he can recover his property. Long before they intend war, they employ themselves in collecting a good stock of war-weapons; and a warrior scarcely sets out on his depredations without his hundred assagais or spears in a quiver; a shield; two or three *knob-kerries*; and a good rifle, with a bag of ammunition. They have in some cases been civilised, and taught to read and write; but they do not like the change, and continually fret and pine after their wild and idle life. A single instance will suffice to shew the irreclaimable spirit of the race. A little girl, who had lost both her parents when quite a baby, was taken by a gentleman and brought up in his family, educated, and baptised: she was particularly noticed for her extreme neatness and activity; and English was her language. When about eighteen years of age, however, she suddenly disappeared, and was afterwards found in Caffreland, the wife of one of her countrymen, with a cross round her; the only outward mark of her civilisation left being a cotton petticoat. On being asked her reason for leaving her friends, she said her heart was Caffre, that she had always been in Caffreland in spirit, and that she had never known happiness until she joined her people.

The Fingoes are exactly like the Caffres in form and stature, and speak the same language, which is soft and musical; they have the same belief, and the same doctors. But the hole in their ear is at the bottom instead of the top, and this is the only thing which distinguishes them from the Caffre tribes. They have been so cruelly treated and ill-used by the Caffres, that they have quite placed themselves under the British protection; and they are now dispersed in little encampments through the colony. Close to the European towns and villages, you will see their little towns of huts and gardens, generally with a good flock of goats, and sometimes cows. The men are industriously inclined, and great numbers of them employed as servants and coolies. The women sell goats' milk and firewood, and make pretty baskets and mats. They are in outward appearances becoming somewhat civilised; and the sight of men, women, and children in European costume is now not uncommon; but beyond that, they are still savages, and, like all South African natives, are utterly faithless and cowardly.

The Hottentot tribes are the domestic servants throughout the whole of the eastern province of the colony. We cannot now class them as savages, for there are thousands of them partially civilised, professedly Christian, and occasionally useful members of society: but, in general, they are faithless and indolent, greatly given to intemperance and theft, and the whole of them smoke immoderately. The women make tolerable servants, but never stay long in one place. They are particularly fond of dress, which consists usually of a gay petticoat and shawl, and a red and black kerchief twisted round the head. They are very improvident, never think of laying up for old age, but spend the greater part of their wages as soon as earned. The language of the Hottentots is Low Dutch, but they nearly all understand and speak English. They are passionately fond of music, and the women have sweet musical voices, and sing very agreeably. The men are

fond of the violin, and many play very well. I have seen a primitive instrument among them called a *gorah*, which is made of a long piece of hollow stick, about a yard in length, with three catgut strings, raised by a bridge, and fastened at each end. They knock it with the chin, draw the thumb across the strings, and so produce a sound something like that of the violin.

The Hottentots have a great antipathy to all other natives of South Africa, with the exception of the Bushmen, and with them they often intermarry. They abhor the Caffres; and I impute their joining them in the present war solely to their wavering and fickle dispositions. The most interesting little village at the Cape of Good Hope, is Genadandal, in the district of Swellendam, first settled by the Moravian missionaries, and inhabited entirely by Hottentots. Here they have excellent schools, where the girls are taught every useful branch of a plain education, and also muslin embroidery, the work from this little village being quite noted, and very expensive; the boys have a trade taught them, are well educated, and, like the girls, trained up in a moral and religious way. The excellence of the rules of this interesting little colony has justly caused it to be considered the most useful and best-conducted missionary station throughout the whole territory.

The Bechuanas are much like the Caffres in habits and belief, but their language is different, and they are well disposed to the English. They are constantly employed as herdsmen, and often as servants, by the farmers, who prefer them to the other natives for their steadiness and fidelity. They are not so fine a race as the Caffres, and the Bechuana women are hideously ugly. Their war-weapons are exactly like those of the Caffres, but they seldom have guns.

So much of the natives of South Africa from my own knowledge of the people, for I was born in the colony, and resided there for many years. Having been repeatedly asked, whether I could in any way account for the inveterate hostilities carried on by the Caffre tribes against the colonists, I will endeavour at least to state my own opinion. After the wars of 1821, the Caffres considered themselves a conquered people, and remained perfectly satisfied with the settlement of the British in their country. When the military forts of Beaufort and other outposts were formed, and could afford them protection, a great number of missionaries went into Caffreland; and amongst the earlier ones, there were some well-educated and excellent men. Had the same class remained, much good would have been effected; but as the colony became more settled, numbers of uneducated people flocked in as missionaries, who, instead of doing good, sowed the seeds of dissension between the Caffres and the colonists, by doing their utmost to impress upon the former, that all the white people who did not hold their peculiar religious opinions were bad men, and would ultimately be destroyed by the Great Spirit; and that even the governor, and those in authority under him, were in the same predicament. Such preaching to savages who held their own doctors as infallible, and who believed these missionaries to be doctors among the white men, was, in my opinion, the cause of the robberies and murders which led to the war of 1834-35. But at the conclusion of that war—when the government had established a good frontier—the Colonial Office in England was persuaded to believe the Caffres to be an ill-used people, whose land had been unjustly taken from them. The lands were, therefore, ordered to be restored; and as a savage cannot understand that anything is relinquished except under the influence of fear, the Caffres naturally came to the conclusion that the English government and white people were afraid of them, and that they might with impunity resume their depredations on the frontier colonists—which depredations were the cause of the present war.

Had the frontier marked out by Sir Benjamin d'Urban been preserved, no considerable body of Caffres could have entered the colony without being observed, as the boundary was free from bush. But the present frontier is so thickly wooded and covered with jungle, that any number can pass into the colony without being perceived by the troops. I trust that, when this war is brought to a conclusion, the frontier may be extended to the line marked out by Sir Benjamin d'Urban, and that no missionary be allowed to proceed into Caffreland without being duly examined and approved of by the heads of the different denominations of Protestants who hold missions in that country, and by a magistrate in the colony.

#### A VISITOR IN TEXAS.

It is not unknown that in Texas there are tigers; and it deserves to be known also, that there are women who are a match for them. When we say women, we are using a trifling latitude of speech, and must be understood to mean, more strictly, a woman, for as yet we have heard of only one who can lay claim to the distinction indicated. This one, however, is what an American newspaper styles 'A Texan woman worth talking about;' and we intend, accordingly, to relate the story of her conquest, and thereby extend the circle of her merited celebrity.

Somewhere in the northern part of Jefferson County, there was living last December, on his own enclosed estate, a certain Yankee citizen of the name of Drake, who, among other livestock and farming-gear, possessed a goodly number of horses. One day, when it seems he was not at all expecting the visitation of wild animals, there sprang suddenly into the enclosure an enormous jaguar, which immediately attacked the horses, killing one outright, wounding others, and apparently intending to make a rich repast of horse-flesh. While engaged in his preparations, it chanced that he was discovered by the farmer's son, who, catching up a gun, sent a bullet into his side, thus putting the intruder momentarily past his appetite; and in the uneasy state of his sensations, he appears to have considered it prudent to make off beyond the range of firearms.

But not being seriously wounded, and the keenness of his appetite having returned, the tiger next day prowled out again, bending his steps in a new direction. This time he entered the farmyard of a Mr Absalom Williams, who, along with his wife, both being well stricken in years, was sitting quietly in the house, while the rest of the family were absent at work upon the farm. The old gentleman was startled out of his afternoon's nap by hearing a strange noise in the front of the house, and on going out, he beheld his house-dog and a tiger in the thick of a sharp contest. Thinking to lend some help on the weaker side, he seized the first thing at hand, which seems to have been an ox yoke, and aimed a strong blow at the tiger, but unluckily missed him, and struck the dog instead. The latter thereupon got away, and retreated with his tail down, leaving the tiger and his master to settle differences between them. In an instant, the glaring animal sprang at Mr Williams, and seizing him by the hand, dragged him for a distance of twenty or thirty feet. The old man, however, having still one hand at liberty, and feeling his mettle rise, straightway engaged with his assailant, determined to give him what he calls a 'rough and tumble fight.' Having dropped the ox yoke, and

being within reach of no other weapon, he seized the tiger by the throat with his remaining hand, and throwing himself forward with all his strength, crushed the creature to the ground, falling, at the same time, by his side. Man and tiger rolled over once or twice without either losing hold, the man, so far as wounds went, getting considerably the worst of it.

The contest was at this stage when Mrs Williams came up to take a part in it, secretly resolved that the tiger should not devour her old gentleman without being made aware of her strong disapprobation. She came forward, gallantly shouldering a gun, which she forthwith snapped at the tiger; but owing to there being no priming in the pan, it of course missed fire, and rendered no service. The tiger, perceiving the intent, and aware of the nature of firearms from his previous experience, precipitately quitted his hold of the man, and jumped at his new adversary, attempting to seize her head with his teeth, and striking and lacerating her bosom with his paws. In trying to avoid the monster, the poor lady fell upon the ground, when the brute made another grasp at her head, and to some extent succeeded—his upper teeth penetrating at the top of the skull and sliding along the bone, thereby peeling off the skin until they met the lower teeth, which were fastened on the right side of her face. Mr Williams, though much disabled by his wounds, being at liberty, again seized the ox yoke, and gave the tiger such a blow as to cause him to desist from the attack. Thus beaten off, the animal took a spring and leaped into the house, sneakily getting under the bed to be out of harm's way. He could hardly have done a more unwise thing for his own safety, and not at all a more convenient one for the success of the old people. Mr and Mrs Williams, seeing the advantage, immediately closed the door to prevent him from escaping. The monster was now as thoroughly trapped as his famous relative of Bengal, which, in getting under a barrel, and protruding his tail out of the bung-hole, exposed himself to the indignity of having it tied in a knot on the outside. Mr Williams was so exhausted from loss of blood and the agony of his wounds, as to be incapable of following up the advantage gained over the adversary; but his better-half, being in rather better plight, again took up the gun, and shaking some powder from the barrel into the pan, proceeded to the attack by a new manoeuvre. Placing the muzzle through one of the openings which the logs of the house afforded, she fired steadily at the tiger and killed him as he lay under the bed. Subsequently, he was dragged out and measured, and his length from tail to nose was found to be exactly twelve feet.

During all the time the fight was going on, no one but the combatants knew anything about it; their nearest neighbour living upwards of three miles off. However, as Mrs Williams was washing the blood from her person, after the fray, some one came riding by, and, alarmed at her appearance, inquired what had happened. The old lady, being much exhausted, was scarcely able to speak, but by way of answer pointed to the dead body of the tiger. Since then, she has pretty well recovered, as also has her gallant and worthy helpmate. They are said to be very fond of telling the story of the conflict, and the old man especially delights to joke about it. He is an old soldier, having formerly fought the British at New Orleans, and, more recently, the Mexicans in the cause of Texas; but of all his battles, this with the tiger is the one he is most proud of; and the old lady justly enough regards it as the most remarkable feat of their mutual lifetime. Her own share in the exploit undoubtedly entitles her to be considered a genuine



backwoods' heroine; and the incident will serve to shew the nature of the dangers to which settlers are exposed in the forest wilds and frontiers of American civilisation.

#### PROSE WRITINGS OF WALTER SAVAGE LANDOR.

THERE are not many modern authors whose works are more likely to endure and become standard reading in future generations, than the *Imaginary Conversations* and other prose productions of Mr Landor. In subtlety of thought, sagacious criticism, precision and perspicuity of style, these writings are of first-rate excellence, and must ultimately place the author in a position of great prominence in the literary history of this century. It is true, his popularity among his contemporaries has not been very considerable; but that may be readily accounted for, inasmuch as his works are not addressed to current tastes, nor are of a kind to be appreciated by the common-place intelligence of the age; they are works rather for the scholar and the student—for that rare but most important class of readers who require something higher than a temporary stimulant to their curiosity, or a more or less refined amusement for the occupation of a vacant hour. They are, strictly speaking, works of literary art, and require an artistic feeling and discernment for their comprehension and appreciation. They have few attractions for the young, the curious, or the matter-of-fact philosopher; they demand a certain maturity of mind, a liberal cultivation, and a more than ordinary acquaintance with remote and peculiar stores of knowledge; and they seem also to require a fair possession of leisure, and a habit of deliberation, such as the great majority of modern readers are not able to command. For immediate or extensive popularity, therefore, they do not appear to be adapted; yet for the select class of studiously disposed persons who have time and culture sufficient to master and enjoy them, they will be found to have manifold fascinations, and will yield a fair measure of wholesome and refined instruction. To such persons among our readers, whose attention may not have been drawn to them, a few remarks on the subject-matter and characteristics of these performances may possibly be acceptable.

They are all contained in two substantial volumes, and consist of the *Imaginary Conversations* before alluded to; the *Citation and Examination of William Shakespeare before Sir Thomas Lucy*; the *Pentameron*, a series of imaginary dialogues between Petrarch and Boccaccio; a collection of letters, constituting a sort of classic romance on the story of *Pericles and Aspasia*; and a few short apoloques and essays. The *Imaginary Conversations* occupy the whole of the first volume, and about a third part of the second; so that it will be seen they form, in point of bulk, the principal proportion. It will be convenient for us here to refer to the smaller productions first, and we accordingly begin with the *Pentameron*.

This purports to be the composition of a certain Italian priest, who, being in want of a bell for his church, brought the manuscript to England, and getting it translated by the best hand he could engage, the work was introduced to the English public. As already hinted, it professes to be the report of conversations, at five successive interviews, between 'Messer Francesco Petrarca and Messer Giovanni Boccaccio,' while the latter lay in an infirm state of health at his villetta in the neighbourhood of Certaldo; 'after which,' we are informed, 'they saw not each other on our side of Paradise.' They discourse, in the first instance, on Boccaccio's *Decameron*, and then diverge into a discussion on the *Divine Comedy* of Dante, 'and sundry other matters.' Petrarch advises his friend respecting the revision and improvement of his *Decameron*, and

advances some objections against it on the ground of its occasional licentiousness; urging him, moreover, to substitute 'the simple for the extravagant, the true and characteristic for the indefinite and diffuse.' Boccaccio, in reply, observes that he has no wish to defend himself under the bad example of another, but he, nevertheless, believes that the example of the illustrious Dante Alighieri, whose genius he pretends not to approach, had some misleading influence over him. 'I may, perhaps,' says he, 'have been formerly less cautious of offending by my levity, after seeing him display as much or more of it in hell itself.' This leads to a discussion of Dante's genius, natural temperament, personal history, and the characteristics of his poetry; in the course of which the friends are not sparing in their strictures, though always acknowledging the immense ability of their author, and dwelling with much emphasis on the finer passages of his poem.

Much excellent criticism is thus incidentally delivered—not at all times restricted to the subject before the speakers, but often having reference to general and comprehensive principles. Hear this admirable conception of the poetic nature: 'The great poet, like the original man of the Platonists, is double, possessing the further advantage of being able to drop one-half at his option, and to resume it. Some of the tenderest on paper have no sympathies beyond; and some of the austere in their intercourse with their fellow-creatures have deluged the world with tears. It is not from the rose that the bee gathers her honey, but often from the most acrid and bitter leaves and petals.' Other passages of great subtlety and beauty, having reference to a variety of topics, might be collected from the *Pentameron*. Here is a sentence, expressing an old sentiment, with the purest simplicity of diction:—'The heart that has once been bathed in love's pure fountain, retains the pulse of youth for ever.' This also is worth pondering:—'Death can only take away the sorrowful from our affections; the flower expands; the colourless film that enveloped it falls off and perishes.' The quiet impressiveness of the following is better than any didactic homily:—'The very things which touch us the most sensibly, are those which we should be the most reluctant to forget. The noble mansion is most distinguished by the beautiful images it retains of beings past away; and so is the noble mind. The damps of autumn sink into the leaves, and prepare them for the necessity of their fall: and thus insensibly are we, as years close round us, detached from our tenacity of life by the gentle pressure of recorded sorrows. When the graceful dance and its animating music is over, and the clapping of hands (so lately linked) hath ceased; when youth, and comeliness, and pleasantry are departed—

Who would desire to spend the following day  
Among the extinguished lamps, the faded wreaths,  
The dust and desolation left behind?

But whether we desire it or not, we must submit. He who hath appointed our days, hath placed their contents within them, and our efforts can neither cast them out nor change their quality.' Abundant thoughts and images, equally beautiful and striking, might be gathered; but we have room for only one passage, about which there is a dignified drollery truly captivating. Petrarch having suggested that some noise which had interrupted the conversation might have been occasioned by Boccaccio's cat, he is answered by his friend in this wise:—'No such thing. I order him over to Certaldo, while the birds are laying and sitting; and he knows by experience, favourite as he is, that it is of no use to come back before he is sent for. Since the first impetuosity of youth, he has rarely been refractory or disobedient. We have lived together now these five years, unless I miscalculate; and he seems to have learned something of my manners,

wherein violence and enterprise by no means predominate. . . . He enjoys his *otium cum dignitate* at Certaldo: there he is my castellan, and his chase is unlimited in those domains. After the doom of relegation is expired, he comes hither at midsummer. And then, if you could see his joy! His eyes are as deep as a well, and as clear as a fountain: he jerks his tail into the air like a royal sceptre, and waves it like the wand of a magician. You would fancy that, as Horace with his head, he was about to smite the stars with it. There is ne'er such another cat in the parish; and he knows it, a rogue! We have rare repasts together in the bean-and-bacon time, although in regard to the bean he sides with the philosopher of Samos; but after due examination.

We shall not dwell on the 'Citation and Examination of William Shakspeare,' as the title sufficiently suggests the subject-matter. It is a work of humour, professing to be a report of the proceedings at the great hall of Charlecote, when Shakspeare was brought before Sir Thomas Lucy touching the matter of deer-stealing. The piece is exceedingly ingenious and amusing; and as a pleasant bit of retrospective satire, if not as a dramatically-conceived representation of an historical event, it is well deserving of perusal, and may long maintain a place among the rest of the author's works.

The story of *Pericles and Aspasia* is more or less known to all readers of Grecian history. Mr Landor's work, under that title, is an attempt to depict their private and domestic life, and generally to illustrate the characteristics of Greek manners, politics, and literature. In the shape of an imaginary correspondence between Aspasia and her friend Cleone, it gives us an account of Aspasia's introduction to Pericles at Athens, and shadows forth the story of their wedded intercourse, along with the relations in which they lived with the philosophers, historians, and artists of the age. The earlier letters contain numerous fragments and short poems of various Greek poets, accompanied by the comments of the writers, and such general remarks on poetry, history, and the occurrences of the hour, as may be supposed to have formed the substance of a correspondence between two gifted and learned ladies of antiquity. As we advance, the statesman, Pericles, comes more distinctly upon the scene; partly through descriptions of him in Aspasia's letters to her friend, and partly through epistles which pass between the former and Pericles himself, at times when they are separated by state or domestic exigencies. Incidentally we obtain glimpses of old Socrates, the young man Alcibiades, the philosopher Anaxagoras, the historian Thucydides, and several other persons of ability and renown. Some of the speeches of Pericles are interspersed; and, one way or another, the principal features of his genius and his manifold accomplishments, are pretty thoroughly delineated or suggested. The whole presents a discursive review of Greek society, and of the chief historical incidents which belong to the period commonly known as the 'Age of Pericles.'

To attempt to convey any sufficient notion of such a work by quotations, would be ineffectual; yet as many passages have an independent meaning, and a beauty of their own, some of them may be not unsuitably extracted, by way of shewing something of the cast of style and thought. Here is a charming sentence from one of the letters of Cleone to Aspasia. She is speaking of the Ionians, and remarks that they are 'more silent, contemplative, and reclusive,' than the Athenians:— 'Knowing that nature will not deliver her oracles in the crowd, nor by sound of trumpet, they open their breasts to her in solitude with the simplicity of children, and look earnestly in her face for a reply.' A few others of equal pith and gracefulness may be appended: 'Tears do not dwell long upon the cheeks of youth. Rain drops easily from the bud, rests on the bosom of the maturer flower, and breaks down that one only

which hath lived its day.' 'There is a gloom in deep love, as in deep water: there is a silence in it which suspends the foot; and the folded arms and the dejected head are the images it reflects. No voice shakes its surface: the Muses themselves approach it with a tardy and a timid step, and with a low, and tremulous, and melancholy song.' On refinement in pride we have this pertinent remark:—'There are proud men of so much delicacy, that it almost conceals their pride, and perfectly excuses it.'

The *Imaginary Conversations*, which form the bulk of Mr Landor's writings, treat of a great variety of subjects, and illustrate an immense variety of character. The persons brought before us, and represented in discourse, are of all conceivable orders and degrees of men, and belong to almost every age and country. We have Richard I. and the Abbot of Boxley conversing about Saladin and the Crusades, the perfidy of European politics, and the uses of the rite of baptism; Sir Philip Sidney and Lord Brooke expatiate on happiness and the charms of country life; Horne Tooke and Dr Johnson discuss questions of philology; Southey and Porson interchange remarks on the state of criticism and the poetry of Wordsworth; Milton and Andrew Marvell discourse on comedy; Sir Robert Inglis and the Duke of Wellington deliver their opinions on the idolatry of the Hindoos and the illustrious gates of Somnauth—but it were endless to run over all the names of the interlocutors, or to indicate the multitude of subjects brought into discussion: suffice it to say, that every conversation relates to something of literary, political, or scientific interest, and that the speakers generally express opinions such, as from what is known of them historically, they would be likely to utter in regard to the matter whereon they are represented to be discoursing. That the dramatic personation of every character should be in all cases accurate and complete, is more than could fairly be expected from the author, considering the number of individuals brought before us, and the wide differences in their respective personalities. Generally speaking, however, it is not impossible to accept the character under the name attached to it, and in many instances the language and opinions imputed to the speaker are thoroughly consistent, and appropriate to his individuality. With the mass of positive thought and sentiment enunciated, we suppose Mr Landor must be more or less identified, though he warns his reader against 'attributing to the writer any opinions in this book but what are spoken under his own name.' This is a permissible precaution, but it is nevertheless apparent what characters have most of his admiration, and also what are the opinions with which he most distinctly sympathises. For instance, a tyrant or a bigot he renders hateful by the words which he makes him utter; and, on the other hand, every wise and truthful person is involuntarily made to have the best of every argument. At the bottom, it is the body of thought and just opinion contained in the *Conversations* which constitutes their real excellency as literary productions; and Mr Landor's chief peculiarity as a writer may be said to lie in his ability to represent the truths which he himself has apprehended from various and innumerable points of contemplation. As any truth imperfectly set forth, or wrenched aside from its relations to other truths and circumstances, becomes in practical effect a mere half-truth, or little better than a falsehood, it is the recognition and uniform observance of this fact which distinguishes the thinker from the pedant or the empiric, and stamps his utterances with a comprehensiveness of meaning that puts to shame their partial and contracted statements. This is one of the highest services that can be performed by literature; and we claim for Mr Landor the distinction of having performed it more completely than any other writer of the age.

The special characteristics of his genius are some-

what difficult to specify; but he may be said to unite within himself the leading attributes of the philosopher and the poet. He has a philosopher's discernment, and the poet's pictorial expression. No keener understanding perhaps could be found anywhere in Europe at this hour, and assuredly he ranks foremost among English writers as a pure and admirable stylist. In solidity of substance, in beauty and gracefulness of form, his works are among the finest specimens of our modern literature. There is no shallowness of thought, no unprofitable exuberances of expression: everything is clear, compact, wisely proportioned and beautifully polished. In proof of his originality, it is to be said that Mr Landor's writings are totally unlike those of any of his contemporaries; and though mere originality is no evidence of greatness, there is evidence enough of this to be observed in the immense amount of wise reflection which he has condensed into his volumes. In reading them, you do not find a continual iteration of the same thoughts and images, but you perceive everywhere the signs of a rich and inexhaustible fecundity. Yet it is not until after a long acquaintance with these writings, that you discern how affluent is the mind from which they sprang—how fertile and exquisitely cultivated the soil wherein all this forest of strength and splendour has its roots. On the whole, we pronounce Mr Landor's works to be eminently calculated to advance the intellectual and moral cultivation of his countrymen; and, as intelligence and purity of taste make progress, we doubt not that they will more and more attract and retain attention, and that eventually they will even enjoy an extensive and lasting popularity. Luckily, Mr Landor can afford to await the issue, and would seem to have no forebodings in regard to it. As he says in one of the imaginary letters of Cleone:—"There are writings which must lie long upon the straw before they mellow to the taste; and there are summer-fruits which cannot abide the keeping." His own unquestionably belong to the sound and enduring class, and, like the wine of a precious vintage, may yield delight to remote generations.

#### AN AUSTRALIAN FLOOD.

The scene of this disaster is a station on the lower Weirabee, distant about twenty-four miles west of Melbourne; and the residence of one of the oldest and most respectable families in the colony of Victoria.

On the morning of the 21st of May last year, the rain began to fall in torrents, and soon caused the river Weirabee to overflow. By twelve o'clock noon, the waters had risen so high as to reach the house of E. D. W—, Esq., which stood on the west side of the stream, in a beautiful little valley, lying between the high banks that run along the margin of the river. The garden lay on the opposite side of the stream, and was by this time completely covered. This state of things seems not to have caused much apprehension, as in Australia floods are of frequent occurrence in the winter season; but at two o'clock the family became suddenly alarmed at the immense body of water, now rolling down on both sides of the house, in the river on the one hand, and in the hitherto dry gullies, or old water-courses, on the other, rendering it impossible to reach the high banks already mentioned, and gain a place of safety. It was therefore deemed advisable to make preparations for getting on the roof of the house. There were eight persons at the station—namely, Mr and Mrs W—, and four other members of the family; a young lady on a visit; and the man-servant. Five of the number being ladies, they were almost helpless. So rapidly did the waters increase, that it was with the utmost difficulty they managed to open the door and keep it open, while one by one they attempted their escape; the stream rushing so wildly through

the passage, that before the family had all quitted the parlour, the chairs, tables, and other articles of furniture, were floating in confusion around them.

At dusk, five o'clock, they were all on the roof, and as well situated as circumstances would permit, trying to cheer each other with the assurance that the house would stand, although immense logs kept continually crashing against it. That hope, however, passed away, for shortly afterwards they could distinctly hear the partitions underneath them gradually giving way. It was now nine o'clock, the rain still descending heavily, a terrific gale of wind blowing, and it was as much as they could do to hang on, sheltering themselves with blankets from the bitter cold. The waters, as well as they could discern in the dark, were raging around them on every side like the ocean in a storm; and by this time had reached as high as the eaves of the house. They, therefore, fled to the saddle-boards or ridge, as a last place of refuge; and just as they got up, the two chimneys, which formed the gable-ends of the house, fell with a crash. The moments of suspense that followed are indescribable. Was it possible that the roof could stand? At length ten o'clock came, and the man-servant succeeded in crossing over to the roof of the kitchen, at the back of which stood an old tree; but he had scarcely got up on its branches, when the roof to which the others clung sunk and disappeared. Another fearful moment, and they were afloat—afloat on the raging flood, amidst the wreck of the house, with its varied contents, tossing in wild confusion around them. Never will the survivors forget the cry that rose on the air, above even the strife of the elements, as the current swept them away on the fragments of the wood-shingled roof. At a short distance, however, and in front of the spot where the house had stood, were several large gum-trees. One of the ladies screamed out: "To the trees! to the trees!" and as the roof dashed against one of them, Mrs K—, Miss L—, and their visitor, caught hold of the branches; but how, they could not tell, as it was too dark to distinguish anything rightly. The remaining four, Mr and Mrs W—, with their daughter and son, sunk in the waters, and, with the exception of the son, never rose again.

Morning was long, long looked for. At last it tardily made its appearance; but with it came no hope of rescue, for all the boats in the neighbourhood had that night been washed away; and the neighbours, who had gathered around the spot, could render no assistance. In the middle of the day, the ladies caught sight of Mr R. W— (the son): they could only distinguish him far away in the distance. Until then, they thought, he had perished with the others; and their joy on discovering him was sadly checked by perceiving his perilous position. As the current carried him down the river, he had caught hold of a floating log, to which he clung, and which afterwards lodged in the branches of a small tree: the action of the waters kept this in continual motion, which compelled him to hold on constantly with both hands; and as the darkness of the second evening closed in upon him, the spectators felt he had only been rescued on the one night to perish on the next.

As dusk approached on the Saturday evening, the waters had subsided considerably; so much so, that the man-servant was able to come down from his tree to the one on which the ladies were sheltered. At the foot of the latter, the roof of the kitchen had lodged. He assured them that they might with safety descend; and most gladly did they avail themselves of his assistance to do so; but as the waters were yet too high to hope for any other relief, they had to pass the second long, long winter night, cold and hungry, on the wreck of the roof of the kitchen, which was now firmly imbedded in the newly thrown-up gravel-bank. Hour by hour, the night slowly wore away; at last



came the morning again, and to the surprise and joy of all, Mr R. W—— was still seen on the floating log, hanging on as before. The waters were now subsiding fast; and shortly after sunrise, about fifteen men from the adjoining stations came down to see what could be done for the rescue of the sufferers. They went to the gentleman first, as his situation was the most perilous; and three of them plunged courageously into the stream, and got ropes across to him. He secured one round his waist, and with that was dragged to the shore, in a state of such exhaustion that it was thought at first he would not recover: but, thanks to a kind Providence, he is now quite well. The men next went to the assistance of those on the gravel-bank, and they had in like manner to be dragged to the land with ropes. At last, they were all landed safely on the high banks, and at once taken to Mr C——'s station, where every kindness and attention was shewn them, and where they remained until they regained their strength. They had been altogether forty-eight hours without food, very thinly clad, and with no covering on either their heads or feet. Everything belonging to the house and family was washed down to Port-Phillip Bay, a distance of about four miles; even the grand pianoforte was found there on the beach, but of course totally destroyed. Nothing of value was saved; and the place is so changed, that no one could recognise the valley where once stood the happy home and beautiful garden of the family at the Weirabe, whose hearth is indeed a lonely one now.

#### HINTS ON BAROMETERS.

Few philosophical instruments are in such general use as the barometer, and yet the qualities which are necessary to insure accuracy, and the proper method of observation, are but imperfectly understood by many to whom its use is familiar. The following hints are intended in some measure to remedy this deficiency, by explaining the principles of its action, and shewing how it may be employed with greatest certainty.

The principle upon which the barometer is constructed, is the same which enables a fly to traverse the ceiling, and a child's leather-sucker to lift a stone—namely, the weight of the atmosphere. Take, for example, the simplest form of the barometer—a tube, closed at one end, filled with mercury, and inverted into a saucer of the same liquid. The mercury will subside in the tube to the height of about 30 inches, and there remain, leaving a vacuum more or less perfect above it. This column of mercury, 30 inches high, exactly balances a column of air reaching from the surface of the liquid in the saucer to the top of the atmosphere—a distance of many miles. Thus the barometer is a kind of balance with the column of air in the one scale, and the column of mercury in the other. These exactly balance one another: and therefore, if an addition of weight is made to one scale, an equal alteration must ensue in the other, or the balance will be destroyed. If, from greater condensation, diminished elasticity, or any other cause, the column of air is increased in weight, it will press down the mercury in the cistern, which, on the other hand, will rise in the tube, until the additional quantity entering from the cistern beneath restores the former equality. Now, it is found that the air is lighter before and during wet than in fine weather, consequently the falling of the mercurial column may be expected at that time. The same principle is applied when the instrument is used for measuring heights; with this difference, that then the column of air is shortened, and therefore lightened, by elevation above the surface of the earth, while in the former case the same effect is produced by increased elasticity.

There are at present two kinds of barometers in

common use, which are distinguished by the names of 'wheel-barometer,' and 'cistern-barometer.' In the former, the tube is bent up at the lower extremity, forming a syphon. A small iron float rests upon the surface of the metal in the shorter leg of the syphon, and a thread attached to the float at one extremity passes over a small wheel, or axle, carrying an index, and terminates in a light weight at the other end. The index points to divisions upon a metal dial-plate, which is the only part of the instrument exposed to view. This barometer, though convenient from the large size of the divisions, is far from certain in its indications; and for accuracy, as well as simplicity, we should decidedly prefer the cistern-barometer, which consists of a cistern to hold the mercury, and an upright glass-tube, 33 or 34 inches in length, attached to a scale upon which the divisions are marked, and further subdivided by a vernier, which is now generally added.

The first point of importance in a good instrument is the mercury itself, which, in order to give accurate indications, must be perfectly pure and clean. As commonly sold in the shops, it is adulterated to a great extent with tin, lead, zinc, and bismuth, which must all be removed before the mercury can be advantageously employed. This is effected by agitating it in a glass-bottle, containing sand or powdered loaf-sugar, opening the bottle from time to time in order to blow out the impure air, and afterwards straining it through chamois-leather. The metal must then be boiled, in order to extricate any tube which it may contain; and when poured into the tube, it should again be heated to boiling-point, in order to expel moisture, and any particles of air which may still remain, or may have contracted in the process of pouring in. We may ascertain when the vacuum above the column is perfect, by holding the barometer in the hands, and suddenly inclining it from the vertical position. By these means, the mercury will be driven against the top of the tube. If the blow thus given be of a hard and dry character, the vacuum is probably good; but if, on the other hand, the blow sound dull and imperfect, we may be sure that the space above the liquid contains air.

After the mercury itself, the tube in which it moves is the next object of consideration. It should be clean, and of uniform bore throughout. The internal diameter varies; but a quarter of an inch is perhaps the best. The tube terminates at its lower extremity in a reservoir of mercury, which sometimes consists of a wooden or ivory dish, but more generally, and far more conveniently, of a leather bag, enclosed in a wooden case. The external atmosphere penetrates the leather, and acts upon the mercury, which cannot be driven through the pores of the leather but by hard pressure. This form is well adapted for carriage; as, by means of a screw beneath the leather bag, the mercury may be fastened up tight to the top of its tube, and when wanted, may be lowered to its former position. Behind the tube is an ivory scale, divided into tenths of an inch, by which the movements of the mercury are measured. For accurate observations, however, these are not sufficiently fine, and a vernier scale is added, to render the instrument more complete. The vernier is moved up and down along the scale by a milled head outside the case. By its means we can measure the height of the mercury to  $\frac{1}{100}$ th of an inch. Suppose, for instance, that the mercury stands a little above  $29\frac{1}{2}$  inches by the barometer scale, and we wish to ascertain its exact height: let the vernier be set with its top or 0 division precisely level with the surface of the mercury. Some division on the vernier will always be found exactly on a line with a division of the barometer scale; say it is the sixth, reckoning downwards from zero. We may then conclude that the height of the mercurial column

is 29½ inches and  $\frac{5}{16}$ ths of an inch, or expressed decimally, 29.56. In the same way, if the coinciding line had been the seventh, the height would have been 29.57; and so on. The rule is this: that the figure on the vernier, which is attached to the coinciding line, will always express the number of hundredths of an inch, which must be added to the height observed by the barometer scale. Little or no dependence can be placed on the words 'fair, change, rain,' generally engraved on barometers. Observations must be made by noticing the change of level, not by any fixed standard, which is nearly certain to mislead. Nor can the state of the weather be predicted from the convexity or concavity of the upper surface of the mercury, which is often considered a sure guide. In fact, the natural position of the surface in a column of pure mercury is convex; and on this principle, the liquid may appear to be rising, while in reality it is not moving at all.

Where accuracy is an object, the barometer should be corrected by a thermometer, for heat, as well as change in the atmospheric density, will influence its indications. Indeed, it is best to have a small thermometer set in the barometer-case, so that the correction can be made, and the proper reading ascertained at once. A barometer should not be exposed to the varying heat of a fire, or of a frequented room, and it must be guarded from draughts. A sheltered nook in a passage is a good position; but any tolerably dry and uniformly-heated place will do. With a good instrument at first, and a little precaution and care afterwards, the barometer may be rendered a very trustworthy and useful, though not absolutely certain weather-glass.

#### THE VOLUNTEER AND THE REGULAR.

The Regular in this anecdote, from Baron Mülling's *Passages from My Life*, is an orderly-officer, captured by Marshal Blücher, and sitting at dinner with him in the Castle of Brienne, while it was cannonaded by the French army:—"The usual cheerfulness reigned during the dinner. Some French balls went through the castle. The field-marshal made excuses to his guest, and directed an officer of his guard to take him to a safe place to finish his dinner; but the French officer declared, that he found himself in too good company to leave them. There was, amongst the guests, a man who, as a volunteer defender of his country, was not a soldier by profession, and was so incommoded by the noise of the balls, and the cracking of the falling panels in the walls over our head, that he kept changing colour, and moving his chair here and there, as if he wished to avoid the falling-in of the ceiling. As all eyes were directed on this restless person, the field-marshal called to him across the table: "Does this castle belong to you?"—"To me? No." "Then you may be quite easy; the castle is solidly built, the cost of repairs will not be considerable, and at any rate you will not have to pay for them."

#### THE MILLER'S WIFE.

In Elderstedt there was a miller who had the misfortune to have his mill burned every Christmas-eve. He had, however, a courageous servant, who undertook to keep watch in the mill on that portentous night. He kindled a blazing fire, and made himself a good kettleful of porridge, which he stirred about with a large ladle. He had an old sabre lying by him. Ere long there came a whole regiment of cats into the mill, and he heard one say in a low tone to another: 'Mousekin! go and sit by Hanskin!' and a beautiful milk-white cat came creeping softly to him, and would place herself by his side. At this, taking a ladleful of the sealding porridge, he dashed it in her face, then seizing the sabre, he cut off one of her paws. The cats now all disappeared. On looking at the paw more attentively, he found, instead of a paw, that it was a woman's delicate hand, with a gold ring on one of the fingers, whereon was his master's cipher. Next morning, the miller's wife lay in bed, and would not rise. 'Give me thy

hand, wife!' said the miller. At first she refused, but was obliged at length to hold out her mutilated limb. When the authorities got intelligence of this event, the woman was burned for a witch.—*Thorpe's Northern Mythology.*

#### A NEW STORY OF A LIFE.

'The seasons come and go, and find him the same.'

##### SPRING.

The hedge is sprouting out again,  
The thrush resumes his voice,  
The rainbow spans the daisied plain,  
The hills and woods rejoice:  
But on a roadside mound there sits—  
Made up of skin and bones,  
And sorely plagued with coughing fits—  
A man a-breaking stones!

##### SUMMER.

The hedge is in its greenest suit,  
The thrush sings clearer still,  
The plain is decked with flower and fruit,  
The sun lights up the hill:  
But there—upon the rubble bank,  
With short asthmatic groans,  
And silvered hair, all long and lank—  
That man's a-breaking stones!

##### AUTUMN.

The hedges gleam with varied leaf,  
The thrush darts to and fro,  
The plain yields up the golden sheaf,  
The hill is all a-glow:  
But—settled down in granite seat,  
With weak and childish moans,  
And big, ungainly, outstretched feet—  
That man's a-breaking stones!

##### WINTER.

Now, stark and spare, the hedges stare;  
The hungry thrush grows bold;  
The plain is bare—all's cheerless there,  
The hill is black and cold:  
But there he sits, as folks pass by  
Chatting in cheerful tones—  
With purple lip and tearful eye—  
That man a-breaking stones!

##### MORAL.

Perchance you pity this old soul?  
His work will soon be o'er:  
Then, recollect, to what a goal  
The immortal part may soar!  
If man, for all his wicked ways,  
In after-life atones,  
'Twere well if *some* had spent their days  
Like him—a-breaking stones!

G. MOORE.

#### INTEREST ON LOANS OF MONEY.

In England, under Edward VI., it was, from religious motives, forbidden entirely; under Henry VIII., it was fixed at 10 per cent. per annum; under Elizabeth, this rate was revived; under James I., it was reduced to 8 per cent.; under Charles II., to 6 per cent.; and under Ann, to 5 per cent. At present, there are no laws fixing the rate of interest: money, like every other commodity, is left to find its own level; yet instead of this leading to usurious dealing, it would require to be good security that would now command 3½ per cent.

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